

To: Bassler, Rachel[Bassler.Rachel@epa.gov]
From: Lee, Monica
Sent: Wed 8/12/2015 9:48:02 PM
Subject: FW: Statement from EPA Administrator to Regional Administrators RE: ongoing field work at mines

Hey Rachel – hoping you might be able to help with some questions related to the halt in mining operations that the Administrator put a statement out on today. The Wall Street Journal and AP have some questions. George is working to track down the mining expert in the EOC who might have info, but I wanted to simultaneously run this by you too. Any chance you have info on any of these questions?

1. How many mines does this apply to?
2. Does this mean cleanup work also will stop?
3. Can we elaborate on what the Admin meant by “field investigation work”?
4. Does this hiatus apply to just hardrock mines or other kinds too? And if other kinds, what kinds?

From: Purchia, Liz [mailto:Purchia.Liz@epa.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2015 4:47 PM
To: Purchia, Liz
Subject: Statement from EPA Administrator to Regional Administrators RE: ongoing field work at mines

EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy today sent the below directive to Regional Administrators regarding ongoing field work at mines:

While we continue to investigate the root causes of last week’s release of mining waste at the Gold King Mine in Colorado, we are instructing our Regions to immediately cease any field investigation work at mines including tailings facilities, unless there is imminent risk in a specific case. We are in the process of initiating an independent assessment by a sister federal agency or another external entity to examine the factors that led to last week’s incident. Based on the outcome from that assessment, we will determine what actions may be necessary to avoid

similar incidents at other sites. While we stand down on existing field investigations and assessments at these mining sites, we also are instructing our Regions to identify existing sites with similarities to the Gold King Mine site and to identify any immediate threats and consider appropriate response actions.